

WV DOT Today!



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Steel work has begun in earnest on the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge on Interstate 64, as contractors

Building Bridges

continued hoisting bridge girders into place over WV 817. The new span is paid for under Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity program.

The bridge, which carries Interstate 64 across the Kanawha River between the Nitro and St. Albans interchanges, is part of a \$244.4 million project to widen 3.8 miles of I-64 to six lanes, and to eight lanes between Nitro and St. Albans. The project calls for building a second bridge just north of the existing bridge and eventually shifting all westbound traffic onto the new bridge, while using the existing span to carry eastbound traffic.

Once the new span is open, contractors will replace the existing bridge with a new structure, using portions of the original bridge pilings.



Contractors began lifting girders into place on Monday, February 21, hoisting one from a barge in the Kanawha River and another from the

western shore and bolting them together in mid-air.

A total of 10 girders were to be hoisted onto their supports on the western end of the new bridge. Because the girders were lifted above WV 817, traffic was periodically disrupted while the girders were hoisted into place. Work was scheduled between 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. and was expected to continue for several days.

Construction of the new bridge is expected to be completed in the summer of 2024.

The I-64 widening project also includes replacing I-64 bridges that cross Conrail railroad tracks,

Rocky Step Road, McCloud Road and Bills Creek Road, plus re-ramping the St. Albans interchange and the ramps connecting the interchange to WV 817.



Also in this issue



Strategy and the War on Potholes

Winter is hard on West Virginia's roads, with constant freezing and thawing leading to a plethora of potholes. But during pothole season, the West Virginia Division of Highways is ready to pull the trigger on potholes both during the winter and after the spring thaw.

"With the spring flowers that pop up also comes our opportunity to come out and start doing permanent repairs on potholes that formed over the winter," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Deputy State Highway Engineer for Division Operations.

WVDOH maintenance crews try to get to as many winter potholes as they possibly can. But because asphalt plants shut down for the winter, patching options are more limited in cold weather.

Maintenance crews use unheated asphalt, called cold patch, to fill potholes during the winter. Cold patch is a temporary repair intended to fill potholes until a more permanent fix in the spring.

The WVDOH also has a limited ability to heat up its own asphalt in heated drums or small trailers. These small batches of heated asphalt may be enough to fill a dozen potholes in a day.

"This time of year, potholes can form seemingly overnight,"



Pack said. "The men and women who maintain our roadways risk their lives every day, surrounded by traffic, to provide the safest roadway they possibly can."

But once the weather warms up and asphalt plants reopen, WVDOH maintenance crews will begin an all-out war on the state's potholes. And that means

repairing them properly.

"The challenge of the pothole is not just putting something in the hole," Pack said. "It's a repair. We have to remove all the failing material."

Since 2018, WVDOH work crews have been required to follow the same procedure when repairing a pothole. First, they grind out the old material to make a nice, squared-off hole. Then they sweep out all the old ground up asphalt and apply a sticky tacking compound to the hole to make the new asphalt bond to the road surface. Finally, a layer of new, hot asphalt is laid into the hole and rolled smooth.

Most of the squared-off pothole repairs made in 2018 are still holding. "When done properly, it's considered a permanent repair," Pack said. "It's not permanent for infinity, but if done right it should last for several years."



WVDOT Today! is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation.**

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Dooley Noted: Two Simple Secrets

Walking through a grocery store parking lot at that uncomfortable time when a cold day is about to turn into a cold night and the sun is setting fast, I saw State Bridge Engineer, Tracy Brown, P.E., with his wife, Jennifer, quickly shuffling groceries into their car. There are three things here; it's turning night, there are groceries in cold storage bags in their trunk, they still have to put those away when they get home. But Tracy and Jennifer stand and talk for 40 minutes as the sun fades from the sky.

With WVDOT, today, there are two simple secrets to being successful. First, you show up. Then, you give what you can. Every day, all the time.

Do both, and it's you who is excelling, moving forward, being recognized for your commitment to The Vision, seeing your good work come together with the work of your allies who are



— together — building West Virginia as we should. Two simple steps — show up, give what you can — and it doesn't matter that there's still more to do, or if you make mistakes, or are still reaching upwards, because you have allies at your side and they're working too, and you're moving. But if you show up and try not to give, with WVDOT, today, you'll run into difficulty. Our momentum is a river and you'll be the leaf stuck to a rock. Jump in, give what you can, it's that simple.

So what did Tracy and Jennifer talk about for 40 minutes in that evening parking lot? WVDOT of course! Moving forward, not holding each other back. Remember this as we move into spring with all the mud, all the rain, all the mess. If we're here with not just the right mindset, but the right "heart set," we'll get it done and take proper care of our West Virginia.

3 Cheers for ZERO—3 Cheers for Charlene!



Safety With Action Today (SWAT) is just WVDOT's hottest bowl of acronym soup; it's a reflection of our dedication to answering citizens questions 100% of the time, with complete answers — understanding what they need to know, responding in a manner they can understand, speaking for work our people are doing on roads all around the state.

<— Charlene Chandler is smiling big, because late SWAT responses had plagued us and were unacceptable, but now they're a thing of the past. Statewide, we have zero lates, two reporting periods in a row. And there's no good reason and no valid excuse to ever again break that streak. Statewide, we are uniform, we are top notch, and we are moving forward.

This is a note from Randy and Jennifer; Public Relations Division's leadership team. We're proud of Charlene and the statewide team of SWAT Coordinators. Well done, all of you!



We Got the Beet: DOH Tests Fighting Ice With the Sugar Beet

The West Virginia Division of Highways may soon have a new weapon in the war against snow and ice with a pilot program to pretreat roads with beet juice in some of West Virginia's most mountainous terrain.

Beet juice is the liquid left over after extracting the sugar from sugar beets. Beet juice can be mixed with salt brine to pretreat roads in anticipation of ice and snow.

Beet juice is a common road treatment in Canada. Nearby states using beet juice on their roads include Ohio, Maryland, and Tennessee.

Perry Keller, in charge of research for the WVDOH, said beet juice has several advantages over just plain brine and just plain salt. When mixed with brine, beet juice significantly lowers the freezing temperature of the mixture, allowing it to keep melting snow and ice down to nearly zero degrees Fahrenheit.



Beet juice is also slightly sticky, making it harder to wash away than both brine and road salt. The same stickiness helps keep ice from sticking to the road surface, making it easier for snowplows to scrape off. It also helps road salt stick to the surface.

Beet juice is also better for the environment and less

corrosive to cars, pavement, and bridges than brine and salt and can significantly cut down on the amount of salt used on roadways. It can be mixed and applied with equipment the DOH already has.

The DOH plans to test beet juice on a 15-mile stretch of Corridor H between Kerens and the Barbour County line in mountainous Randolph County. The mixture will be tried on both asphalt and concrete to see how well it works and what drawbacks it might have.

Hoppy Kercheval Talks Pothole Repairs

In a recent episode of the MetroNews talk show "Talkline," radio host Hoppy Kercheval drilled down with Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston into the problems of maintaining roads and patching potholes in the dead of winter.

During the 11-minute interview, Kercheval asked where the Division of Highways stood in its annual battle against potholes.

"Last year we put 85,000 tons of asphalt down to repair the potholes out there," Wriston responded. "I think we're going to have a much lower number this year."

Because the DOH has been milling out potholes before filling them with fresh asphalt, repairs should last longer and require less filling every season, Wriston believes. "I think that will be a good metric for how we're doing," he said.

Kercheval then wanted to know if it was even possible to patch

potholes in freezing weather and snow. Because asphalt plants shut down every winter, the DOH is limited to using cold asphalt or small batches of reheated asphalt to fill potholes during the winter months.

"We can fill those holes up and maybe keep people from having a wheel-buster, but the truth is that material just doesn't last," Wriston said. "We can heat that hole up a little bit and we can do some practical things that will stretch that life out a little bit until we can repair it with the proper materials and proper procedures."

"Sometimes the best we can do is just get something in that hole to save somebody's tire and wait it out until spring," Wriston said.

Fortunately, some asphalt plants are opening early this season.



WVDOH Partnering With WorkForce West Virginia to Put State Residents to Work

The West Virginia Division of Highways is partnering with WorkForce West Virginia to put state residents to work in the highways industry.

Under the program, WorkForce West Virginia pays potential job applicants to go to work with local WVDOH highway districts, where they receive training for highway maintenance work.

WorkForce West Virginia will pay the temporary workers' salaries for up to a year. During that time, their performance is evaluated.

"If nothing else, it's a 12-month job interview," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Deputy State Highway Engineer for Division Operations. "If you're conscientious and perform well there's a good chance we'll be able to find a place for you."

If you're currently unemployed and want to see if you're eligible for the program, call Michael Austin at 304-342-2078, extension 7.



District 1 Manager Arlie Matney said eight WorkForce workers are currently helping with canopy clearing in the Chelyan area and will soon be put to work milling and filling potholes. He's expecting up to 40 more.

District 2 Engineer Rob Pennington, P.E., said two WorkForce workers are doing canopy clearing in Lincoln County, while seven are working in Cabell County cleaning out concrete drainage gutters along roadways and picking up litter.

Matney believes the program is an important tool that can not only find talented people to work for the WVDOH, but also provide an avenue for West Virginians to find work without having to leave the state.

"So far it's been really successful," Matney said. "I feel good about giving people the opportunity they deserve to show us what they can do for our state."

Legal, HR Working to Solve Grievances Early

The West Virginia Department of Transportation's Legal and Human Resources divisions are working with DOT's employees to resolve employee grievances before reaching Level 1.

"Our employees are our agency's greatest assets," said Rebecca McDonald, Employee Attorney Manager for the DOT Legal Division.

Instead of an adversarial relationship, Human Resources and the Legal Division have been making a concerted effort to work WITH aggrieved employees as opposed to against them, in order to resolve grievances with as little conflict as possible.

"We're all in the same agency," McDonald explained. "We're trying to work together to solve problems that may arise."



"We need to solve the issue together," McDonald said.

Key to the effort is listening to what aggrieved employees have to say and finding out what it is they want.

"It helps with morale," McDonald said. "It helps people feel heard, and it reinforces that it's not an us-against-them relationship."

The legal division typically handles between 100 and 120 employee grievances a year.

So far for 2022, the Legal Division has dealt with 21 employee grievances. Of those, they have been able to resolve 12 without having to go through the entire grievance procedure.

"It's something we're getting very good at," McDonald said.



March Madness

They say March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. Early March this year looks like it's going to have above-average temperatures, but time will tell how lion-like the month will be.

But there are also two important dates to remember in the month of March: the beginning of Daylight Savings Time and the first day of Spring.

Daylight Savings Time is the date that we historically set our clocks ahead one hour, so that darkness falls at a later hour on the clock. This is thought to decrease the use of electricity at night and has the benefit of giving many of us more daylight for activities after work.

Daylight Savings Time falls this year on March 13.

The idea for Daylight Savings Time was first suggested – satirically – by Benjamin Franklin in 1784. By the 1800s many were giving serious consideration to moving clocks ahead in the springtime, partly to save on the cost of candles.

Port Arthur, Ontario, Canada was the first major community to



adopt Daylight Savings Time in 1908. Germany and Austria-Hungary adopted Daylight Savings Time nationwide in 1916. Most of Europe and Russia followed suit, and the United States officially adopted Daylight Savings Time in 1918, although it is not observed in Hawaii or Arizona.

However, Daylight Savings Time is largely a European and American construct. Most of Asia, Africa and South America do not observe it.

The other important date in March is the first day of Spring, which falls this year on March 20.

The first day of Spring is marked by the Spring Equinox. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is when the sun crosses the equator heading north. Starting on this day, the Northern Hemisphere starts tilting closer to the sun, leading to longer hours of daylight and warmer temperatures.

So as March marches on, don't forget to set your clocks ahead and start enjoying the longer days.

Roads to Prosperity; WVDOH to Build a New Bridge at Seneca Rocks

Funding from Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity program will replace a low water crossing at Seneca Rocks with a 140-foot steel truss bridge.

"This low water crossing provides the only emergency access into Seneca rocks for vehicles, and has been closed since it was damaged by a log truck in 2019," said State Bridge Engineer Tracy Brown, P.E. "Because of the nature of the project, it would be very difficult to find funding for the new bridge without Gov. Justice's Roads to Prosperity program."

The low water crossing carries Roy Gap Road over the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac River at the base of Seneca Rocks, near the United States Forest Service Seneca Rocks Discovery Center.



A log truck damaged the pipes that carry water through the existing structure, causing water to run over the top. The West Virginia Division of Highways was forced to close the low water crossing in 2019, cutting off an access point for emergency vehicles into Seneca Rocks and homes in the area.

The new steel truss bridge will be raised far enough above the water to eliminate problems with flooding. The new bridge and abutments will include stamped and stained concrete and painted steel to blend in with the environment and to be as attractive as possible.

The project is expected to cost about \$1.7 million and is scheduled to go to bid in March. Construction is expected to take about a year.



Contract Awarded for Charleston Bridges

A massive project to clean and paint nine interstate bridges and six interstate ramps through downtown Charleston is among four contracts awarded by the West Virginia Division of Highways on Tuesday, March 1, 2022.



\$485,051.44 to replace the Pond Fork Bridge in Boone County. The project will be paid for with funding from

Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity highway construction and maintenance program.

Blastech Enterprises Inc. was awarded a contract for \$27,420,996.50 to clean and paint the series of bridges and ramps on Interstate 77 and Interstate 64. Funding is a combination of federal and state monies.

The bridge was built in 1948 and carries Grapevine Road across Pond Fork. The bridge has been under weight restrictions since 2014 and is subject to yearly inspections.

The project includes bridges over Piedmont Road, Bigley Avenue, and Court Street and ramps accessing Court Street, Leon Sullivan Way, and Brooks Street.

Elite Industrial Painting Inc. was awarded a contract for \$507,364 to clean and paint the Gorman Bridge in Grant County.

Turman Morton Inc. was also awarded a contract for

The next bid letting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

St. Albans Asphalt Plant Open!



The early opening of an asphalt plant in St. Albans has given West Virginia Division of Highways patching crews within about an hour's drive of the plant a jump start on milling and filling potholes.



"The DOH maintenance crews are very pleased with the positive turn of the weather, which permits them to do what they do best," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Deputy State Engineer for Division Operations.



Asphalt plants typically don't open until late March or early April, when contractors can be reasonably sure of warm weather. But one plant in St. Albans is open now, giving the WVDOH a chance to mill and fill on high-visibility routes like MacCorkle Avenue in South Charleston.



In early March, crews were aggressively attacking potholes in Boone, Cabell, Clay, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, Mercer, Mingo, Putnam, and Raleigh counties.





In an ongoing effort to increase seat belt use in West Virginia, the West Virginia Governor’s Highway Safety Program (GHSP) is promoting a statewide Click It or Ticket high visibility campaign.

The 2021 Observational Seat Belt Survey results revealed that seat belt usage in West Virginia had declined since the previous Seat Belt Survey in 2019, falling from 90.2 percent to 88.12 percent.

West Virginia law enforcement officers will be out in full force, ticketing seat belt violators who are caught traveling without a correctly buckled seat belt or transporting unrestrained children.

Seat belts save lives. Law enforcement would rather write a seat belt citation than serve a death notification due to a crash.

For more information, check out drivesafewv.com/click-it-or-ticket/.

St. Patrick’s Day — March 17 — is one of the biggest drinking nights of the year, and this, unfortunately, means more drunk drivers on the roads. The West Virginia Governor’s Highway Safety Program (GHSP) reminds you: if you plan to drink, plan a sober ride home. Keep these facts in mind and share the word about the dangers of drunk driving so you can continue merry-making for all the St. Paddy’s Days to come.

Always remember to plan ahead if you will be celebrating. If you plan to drink, plan a sober ride to get you home and live to be Irish another day. Is it your turn to be the designated driver?

Law enforcement across the state will be conducting patrols to find impaired drivers before they cause a crash and possibly risk their life or the lives of others on or near the roadway.

For more information, please visit the dmv.wv.gov/ghsp or visit



West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest, hosted by the West Virginia Division of Highways for 21 years and counting, wrapped up its qualifying round at the end of February. Middle and high school students from around the state competed in this free STEM activity, designed to let students know about engineering jobs in our home state. Congratulations to all the participants.

The top 30 teams on the leaderboard were:

- TayK, Caelan Adkins, Wayne High School.
- Emma S, Emma Sherman, Musselman High School.
- Builders League United, Ryan Smith, Greenbrier East High School.
- Better.Than.Troy’s.Bridge, Chloe Thacker, Wayne High School.
- Bruhmoment, Troy Robertson, Wayne High School.
- One Kelvin, Kaleb Beckett, Wayne High School.
- Sunset Drivers, Bhavya Patel and August Vincent, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School.
- The Vex Bois, Philip Richmond and Kyle Koch, Wood County Vocational Tech Center.
- Coconut & Lime, Benjamin Blackwell and Ayden Legg, St. Albans High School.
- Team 3, Josi Ervin and Jake McGilvray, Greenbrier East High School.
- I Made a Bridge, Garrett Hutson, Grafton High School.
- Potato Games, Nathaniel Vincent, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School.
- Hawk Eagle, Halianna Holliday and Tristan Deeds, Greenbrier East High School.
- Dumbledore’s Army, Rayce Dickerson and Preston Eades, Midland Trail Middle School.
- Maddison+Alaya, Maddison Huffman and Alaya Puffenburger, Mountain Ridge Middle School.
- Tucker and Brody, Tucker Wiant and Brody Cochran, Mountain Ridge Middle School.
- PLTW Braxton & Mikey, Mikey Meyer and Braxton Leisure, Wood County Vocational Tech Center.
- Serenity, Serenity Cochran, Marlinton Middle School.
- Where’s My Bridge? Hannah Buly and Ceili Alder, Greenbrier East High School.
- Frebby Pabby, Jameson Vance and Hannah Keller, Greenbrier East High School.
- PB&J, Paisley Tabor and Jacob Jackson, Hurricane High School.
- Bussne Bridge, Ian Burford, Greenbrier East High School.
- Jerry Bones, Justin Lester, Pikeview High School.
- 7Salamanders, Garrett Ferguson and Jonathan Lewis, Frankfort High School.
- Warrior Way, Jillian Campbell, Riverside High School.
- The Builders, Hunter Hayton, Wayne High School.
- Bridgets, Braedon Eves and Levi Cassidy, Wayne High School.
- Bob_the_Bridge_Builder, Masan Adkins, Wayne High School.
- Double Trouble, Sophie Carpenter and Nadia Madenspacher, Mountain Ridge Middle School.
- P_Money, Ashton Pack, Wayne High School.



Hiring Events Slated for March

District 1 is hosting hiring events from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at District 1 headquarters, 1340 Smith St., Charleston; and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, March 10, 2022 at Putnam County headquarters, 3256 Teays Valley Road, Hurricane, to hire transportation workers.

“Transportation Workers are our boots on the ground,” said District 1 Manager Arlie Matney, who began his career as a Transportation Worker more than 30 years ago. “They’re the people we see out here patching potholes, pulling the ditches, and cutting the brush. They are the backbone of the Division of Highways, and it’s a real career path with room to grow.”

WVDOT jobs offer competitive wages, great benefits, a supportive work environment, and excellent chances for advancement. WVDOT is currently hiring for Transportation Worker 1 and Transportation Worker 2 positions.

Gov. Jim Justice’s \$2.8 billion Roads To Prosperity program created the immediate need for thousands of transportation workers, engineers, equipment operators, bridge inspectors, administrators, and others who would be needed to bring the Governor’s vision to fruition.

In 2021, the WVDOT hired 638 new employees. Check the Careers page on the WVDOT website frequently, and you just may find your perfect job.

“If you join our team, management has created a path where the steps to move up are in your hands,” Matney added. “This is a place you can make a career.”



VISION AWARDS

Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Wriston for their dedication to The Vision.

Alice Irvine—District 9

Tami Wright—Legal

Ashley Wright—Legal

Kelly High—DMV

Richard Crites—State Rail Authority

Tillman Adkins—Performance Management

Penny Lester—State Highway Engineer

The Vision is simple; to be the best DOT in the country, for the purpose of giving our West Virginia the chance it should have — a place of prosperity and joy, where citizens have the best chance to build the lives they hope for. To be the best DOT in the country based on the quality of our work and motivation. To be the safest place for our employees to work. To be the best trained, and most educated.

To go Above and Beyond, every day.



WV on the DOT Podcast

New guests each week!

To listen, visit:

[Transportation.wv.gov](https://transportation.wv.gov)



NHTSA's Vehicle Safety Recalls Week Is March 7-13

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is hosting Vehicle Safety Recalls Week from March 7-13, 2022. The event coincides with the beginning of Daylight Saving Time, which occurs Sunday, March 13, 2022. Twice a year, as Americans set their clocks forward and back, we work to remind drivers to use this time to also check their Vehicle Identification Numbers for open safety recalls using NHTSA's user-friendly VIN Look-Up Tool. This web tool allows vehicle owners to check for open safety recalls on their vehicles or automotive equipment, such as tires and car seats.

Checking Your VIN

Checking your VIN is easy: The 17-digit number is located on the lower portion of your vehicle's windshield on the driver's side. It may also be on your vehicle's registration card, or on your insurance card. Enter this number into the search bar at [NHTSA.gov/recalls](https://www.nhtsa.gov/recalls) and, in seconds, you'll know if your vehicle is subject to an open safety recall. If your vehicle is affected by a safety recall, contact your local dealer to schedule a recall repair as soon as possible. All recall repairs at your local dealership are free. This tool also provides details on any unrepaired recall in your vehicle for at least the past 15 calendar years. An urgent air bag recall is still ongoing, currently the largest vehicle recall in U.S. history. Check to see if your vehicle is affected.

Staying Ahead of Recalls

Once you've checked your VIN for an open recall, sign up for

Recall Alerts. If your vehicle is included in a future recall, you'll receive an email letting you know. The VIN Look-Up Tool also provides details on unrepaired safety recalls from major automakers, motorcycle manufacturers, and some medium/heavy truck manufacturers. You can also search for open recalls on your car seats, tires, and other vehicle-related equipment. To help make life a little easier, download NHTSA's updated SaferCar app to stay informed about your vehicle. Once in the app, enter the vehicle's VIN, as well as your car seats, tires, or any other automotive equipment information, and NHTSA will send you an alert if a safety recall is issued on them.

Think of the SaferCar app as your virtual garage. Once you download the app — available for iOS and Android — you can add any vehicle or related equipment, like tires, trailers, and car seats. SaferCar notifies you of all related recalls, even directing you to local dealerships, so you can quickly make an appointment and get it fixed for free.

Take Recalls Seriously

In 2020, there were 886 safety recalls affecting 55 million vehicles and other equipment in the United States, but about 25% of recalled vehicles go unrepaired. This puts drivers, passengers, and other road users at risk.

If you think your vehicle may have a safety-related defect that isn't part of a current recall, contact NHTSA online or by calling the agency's Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. Sometimes just one complaint is enough to trigger a safety recall.

Danny Doddrill Celebrates 40 Years



District 9 Nicholas County Administrator Charlie Reel (on the left) recently recognized Danny Doddrill for 40 years of service with the West Virginia Division of Highways by presenting him with a certificate and pin. Doddrill was also recognized by TW3CRCH Eddie Barlett (not pictured), who is in charge of Nicholas County's Curtain Substation where Doddrill is stationed.

West Virginia Division of Highways is proud of our longtime employees and happy to provide a work environment where individuals feel they are free to advance and make a lifelong career for themselves.

